

Bill Summary taken from njea.org

- **Bill S-2043** (Kyrillos R, 13) is another item in the Governor's "toolkit." This legislation would allow boards of education to impose their "last, best offer" as the terms and conditions of employment, overturning the current collective bargaining law (as amended in 2003 to prohibit contract imposition) which has brought fairness and balance to the negotiations process without harmful strikes.
- **Senate bill S-2025** (Kyrillos R, 13), part of the Governor's "toolkit," would authorize Executive County Superintendents to approve all locally negotiated collective bargaining agreements. It is ready to be heard by the Senate Budget and Appropriations Committee.
- **S-1872**, sponsored by Sen. Lesniak (D-20) and Sen. Kean (R-21), would create a publicly funded voucher program in New Jersey under the guise of "opportunity scholarships." The program would divert \$360 million from the state treasury to subsidize private and parochial school tuition by giving dollar-for-dollar tax credits to corporations contributing to "scholarship funds."
- **S-1940** (Van Drew, Ruiz)/A-2772 (Albano, Ramos, Diegnan, Riley) will bring fairness and certainty to the bargaining table in uncertain economic times by allowing local associations to bargain for positions to be saved when a local is asked to make concessions in order to save jobs. This bill has already passed the Senate with strong bipartisan support (36-2).
- This NJEA-initiated legislation would require that the monetary equivalent of any wage or benefit concession agreed to by a collective bargaining unit must be used by the school district to offset any reduction in force initiated for economic reasons.
- **A series of bills** that are part of the Governor's "toolkit" would limit unused sick leave and vacation buyout for school employees to \$15,000.
- The lead bill is S-2220 (Sarlo-D, 36) which has been released from the Senate Budget and Appropriations Committee. The Assembly version is A-2952 (Casagrande R, 12, Munoz R, 21). Currently only S-2220 is ready for a Senate vote.
- **S-2043** (Kyrillos R, 13) is another piece of the Governor's "toolkit." It would cap increases in school districts' labor costs, including the cost of benefits, at 2%.

- **Gov. Christie recently announced an education “reform” agenda.** While most of the proposals (with the exception of private school vouchers) are not yet in the form of legislation, we anticipate a series of bills aimed at implementing them. The key elements of the plan include:
 - • **Teacher evaluations** – Will appoint a nine-member New Jersey Educator Effectiveness Task Force. That body’s conclusions are already established, including a requirement that “at least 50%” of a teacher’s evaluation be tied to student test scores.
 - • **Merit pay** – Would do away with the current salary schedule system of paying teachers based on years of service and degrees held. He wants to replace that system with a merit system based exclusively on individual teachers’ ability to improve student test scores.
 - • **Tenure** – Calls for tenure to be “granted and maintained” by having teachers “showing they know how to teach,” by raising student test scores.
 - • **Charter schools** – Rapid expansion of charter schools, including “cyber” or “virtual” online schools, by increasing the number of charter school authorizers, as well as by allowing private, parochial and traditional public schools to convert to charter status.
 - • **Vouchers** – Calls for S-1872, a voucher bill, to be passed by the legislature. That bill would divert 360 million tax dollars to subsidize private and parochial schools. Other elements of the plan would include a new credential and career ladder for teachers and principals, an alternate route for principal certification to allow non-educators to become principals, and an expanded data-collection system to link student performance to individual teachers.